



FOOD AND BEVERAGE: THE BAR MANAGER

Steven Brown, Inn-Formation, highlights the key roles and responsibilities of the Bar Manager.

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The food and beverage (F&B) seminars that we held around the UK in April and May threw up the usual range of diverse yet fascinating questions, together with highlighting the secretary's / manager's more usual concerns regarding margins, wages, yields and 'losses'!

However, one topic that was being raised to a higher profile was that of the roles of those of you charged with the day to day management of your F&B operations.

With that in mind, I thought it might be beneficial to focus on the job roles and key responsibilities of both your head bar person and head chef. Now, before launching into this, please allow me to clarify one thing. The following guidelines do not only relate to a newly-created position or role in either of these positions, but to the tasks currently being undertaken by your personnel that already occupy these lofty perches and, by so doing, we can clearly provide you with a form of measurement by which you can assess their current performance against ideal industry guidelines.

In essence, what follows is an identification of the key performance indicators (KPIs) and tasks for these people. We must also bear in mind the club manager's role in all of this, and indeed, I shall return to that later in the piece.

No matter what size of F&B operation you have, you need experienced, strong, dedicated and astute individuals to control these key services.

In my considerable experience of dealing with F&B managers in golf clubs, I have found, on many, many occasions, that, whilst bar managers and chefs are undoubtedly great practitioners of the art of day to day management of bars and kitchens, they can be somewhat lacking in the other half of the job – namely the management skills incorporating the roles of administration, people management, cost control, profit protection and product promotion. This is not true of all such personnel and indeed I have, through my on-site consultancies with clients, encountered and sung the praises of those individuals who successfully manage to complete both parts of these challenging roles.

What should the busy manager of a golf club be looking for from their incumbent managers or the new person they are seeking to fill these key roles?

In my view there are certain key criteria that are essential to the roles and, once they are satisfactorily identified and achieved, then the rest should present no major problem.

BAR MANAGER

Let me deal first of all with the bar manager and his or her key roles and responsibilities.

Here are my top ten list of essentials:

1. The day to day control and management of the bar operation.
2. To resource the correct number of appropriately-qualified staff to assist in managing the operation.
3. To identify the individual roles and responsibilities of those reporting to them.
4. To help identify, agree and compile a list of realistic control measures for gross profits, gross margins, wage levels, yields, waste reduction, qualification achievements, increased productivity, promotional activity regarding products and events, and then to achieve the agreed targets and goals as identified by the club.
5. To provide the club with guidelines and direction regarding the government and control of the bar operation by means of tried and tested operational procedures and accepted industry norms.
6. To provide both cost saving and income generating schemes designed to improve the club's bottom line profitability.
7. To provide the club with a relevant operating procedures' document detailing all aspects of bar control.
8. To assist in the appointment, selection and development of all key staff under their control.
9. To be aware of the members' wishes regarding service standards and product placement and, where possible and in line with the club ethos, to deliver the same.
10. To comply with all legislative processes involved concerning the day to day operation of the unit regarding licensing law, employment law and health and safety, and other matters of compliance.

The above are the main points or KPIs required of the role, but there are many more points that need to be addressed or clarified within these. The additional A to Z points are in no way any less important than those already highlighted.

They are:

- a) To maintain sufficient stock levels and a product range that meets the customers' needs.
- b) Not to overstock (using industry norms guidelines on stock as a guide) and negotiate the return and credit of over stocked items.
- c) To welcome all members, visitors and guests in a professional manner that promotes the best interests of the club.
- d) To stock up prior to daily service and prepare all products and services ready for sales activity.

- e) To ensure all trading areas are meticulously clean.
- f) To report any defects (in fabric) to the appropriate line manager and to ensure all areas are safe.
- g) To maintain and service all equipment relevant to their department.
- h) To ensure the security of the premises and all stocks before, during and after service.
- i) To place all stock orders (or delegate the task) with nominated suppliers.
- j) To ensure products are correctly priced and tills adjusted accordingly. Additionally, to assist in the price-setting process, if required, recommending prices that reflect the market sensitivity whilst protecting the agreed target margins.
- k) To undertake any advanced training that the club has highlighted that would lead to an advancement in their knowledge in the role.
- l) To ensure (where possible) that staff are conversant with, and comply with, all till technology procedures and any other equipment they are required to operate in their roles.
- m) To see that all staff are appropriately dressed and ready for service.
- n) To install staff rotas to meet the club demands for both full and part time staff.
- o) To maintain all cellar procedures in accordance with manufacturers' and product providers / recommendations.
- p) To identify a 'chain of command' within their operation to ensure that their duties can be delegated in the event of their absence and to train those personnel identified to the correct and acceptable level.
- q) To conduct staff reviews regarding performance and to mentor where necessary.
- r) If required, to obtain and maintain staff's personal licence status.
- s) To communicate with the administration department regarding daily transactions and to submit all relevant paperwork.
- t) To secure all income in the safes provided for onward transmission to the admin function together with all details regarding all shortfalls.
- u) To implement grievance and disciplinary procedures as requested by the club and report all serious breaches of discipline to their line manager.
- v) To provide, via the club, all staff with the relevant job descriptions and contracts of employment or at least ensure that those responsible within the club have complied with the statutory regulations concerning this.
- w) To attend weekly meetings with their department head to ensure the smooth running of their operation. Additionally, to attend house committee meetings or similar and provide all relevant details pertaining to the role. Similarly, to liaise with the catering department concerning all matters that may have a direct impact upon its function.
- x) To conduct themselves in a professional manner in all their dealings with members and visitors as the club's key representative for the bar operation.
- y) Where the club operates such a scheme, to ensure that the external stock taking process, if carried out, is done so in accordance with the strict and accepted industry practices and

that the results are fully analysed and a subsequent action plan is produced for their line manager, detailing measures needed to rectify any concerns.

- z) To ensure that all till transactions are complied with and that use of the wide range of management reporting systems are utilised, using the information supplied to the best advantage of the club and reporting any concerns to their line manager. At the same time, ensuring that staff are conversant and fully comply with the systems required for all cash and card dealings and are held accountable for any shortfalls.

There we are then. It could even be argued that today's thrusting, dynamic and enterprising manager could encompass this role together with his or her other current daily tasks, thereby negating the role and saving the club even more money!

Meanwhile, back on planet earth, the more enlightened managers do realise the need for their head bar manager to assume the level of responsibility and professionalism identified above to ensure that the manager doesn't ultimately end up doing their role for them!

The manager must have supreme confidence in their bar manager in that they will manage, control, direct and maximise the resources under their control and do everything within their power to deliver whatever the club requires from this stand-alone profit centre and, by appointing the right calibre of person, have confidence that this desirable state of affairs is eminently achievable.

How well do you think you are doing with this list and your current incumbents?

Have I described how your bar manager is currently performing for you, or might you need to make a few adjustments to their roles in the coming months?

This key role demands the attention to detail I have listed, and, whilst for some clubs, the task responsibilities I have highlighted may be somewhat of a hammer to crack a nut, the same rules will apply albeit at a watered down level to reflect the role.

For the busy manager, you need this level of guidance as much as they need it. By better understanding the complexities of the roles, you will better be able to assess whether or not the performance of the individuals is up to the mark or not, and in so doing, it will enable you to mentor, guide or, in extreme circumstances, remove them from the role based on written evidence.

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This document complements library document: 1219 - The Head Chef

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